572 Unlike the affection among relatives, friendships cool and even end. This is especially true for pacts based purely on mutual assistance. Thus, if one of the friends is somewhat too stingy in comparison to the other, a rupture quickly results.

[561] The Nkundó also have especially affectionate feelings for their "age mates" (bonfngá, pl. banfngá), that is, for all those who were born the same day, week, month, or period as they. They feel united by special ties. Among themselves age mates consider and treat each other as brothers, help and assist each other, etc.

Their affection is natural; the sort of selfishness that may be found among "friends" is not present among age mates.

Their relationship is so close that if the occasion arises, they lend each other their wives. (1)

1. See Chapter VI, Article VIII, 1.

[551] Lastly, individuals bearing the same name (ndof, pl. bandof) show real affection toward each other; they help each other and exchange gifts. They make no pact as do the boseka, however.

It should be noted that these various bonds do not exist between persons of opposite sexes, among whom they would be condemned as concubinage. [37]

Article IV. Conjugal Love

583 The question has often been asked: how about love among these peoples? Do husbands and wives really love each other? We are not speaking here of sexual passion, which is generally present in addition to love between man and woman, but which in itself is clearly distinct from it. Love is the result of various emotions -- congeniality, affection, mutual appreciation, admiration, devotion, etc., and we judge the perfection of love according to the presence or absence of any one of these elements and their degree.

The question is by its very nature a very delicate one to answer. Actually, it is difficult to observe and analyze clear and precise facts pertaining to the subject. Our notion of it must of

583× 431 556 Although given by the father-in-law to his son-in-law and therefore part of the nkomf, yet these valuables have neither their significance nor their purpose. They are disbursed at the time of the payment of the ikulɛ. This practice was customary only among men who were unusually wealthy and influential, that is, family heads who occupied prominent positions in native society. It was never omitted for a boldmbd (see Chapter I, Part 2, Article II). The woman's father gave these valuables to his son-in-law, saying: "I am giving you my daughter in marriage. She has always occupied a high position; she is of a very good family. I want her to retain her prominent rank. Therefore here is a bride price; go and get yourself a second wife with these rings, so that my daughter will have her nkita [154] from the very first day. Then come back and pay me the bride price for her."

The woman who was honored by such preferential treatment was called yĕngaende. This word is composed of the roots ĕng, "to acquire by means of a bride price," and ende, "a man (vir)." The name comes from the fact that she herself paid the price for her husband, so to speak, and did so even before he paid the bride price for her.

The Nkundɔ́ have given up this manner of ostentatiously displaying their wealth, so that the custom we have just described now belongs to the past. Nevertheless there are still women who bear the name Yĕngaende, in memory of some ancestor who had been the object of this honor which put her in a privileged position, a royal position, so to speak.

[178] ● [551]

583× From all the foregoing it will be apparent that marriage payments are not unilateral in Nkundɔ́ law and practice. Rather, there is a mutual handing over of goods. Although the goods given by each party differ clearly from one another, they all have an economic and financial value. Therefore we can speak of a real reciprocity in these payments. And although the husband has to furnish the largest and highest amount, it would be wrong to say that he alone must "pay for his spouse," for though he does actually "pay for his wife," she must to a certain extent "pay for her husband." That is what the

593 Iongo of Bokákyá (Boselo, Bombwanja), married to Bokaa is Ifonda
574 of Bowélé; for Mbalaka, daughter of Bolekela wa Imangaiso of the
342 Basékâ Lokuli (Bongili), married to Mbuli is'ea Wela of Bombóngo
558 w'Etefa (Bongale) (1) [286]

[551] 1. She bore the name of Mbálaka (meaning indemnity), because her father had solemnly proclaimed (-békya) and publicly promised that he intended, one day, to place himself in the position of having to pay an indemnity because of his daughter, as proof of his love. Indeed [782] when Mbálaka was married, he killed one of his wives, cut her into pieces, and sent the "meat" to his son-in-law as "the first hen" that his wife would prepare for him. But he did not have to pay [682] [614] the indemnity because the victim's clan was too weak to attempt a war; they did not dare to make a claim and, in order to avoid even greater misfortunes, they resigned themselves to this revolting ignominy.

Article V

Relations Between the Husband and His Wife's Family

606 As has already been said, kinship by marriage is called likilo,
607 and relatives by marriage are called bokilo, bakilo. Mbótsolo is a term of respect for very close relatives by marriage (father-in-law, mother-in-law, sometimes brother-in-law or sister-in-law). When there is a considerable age difference between two affinal relatives, the elder one sometimes calls the younger bokilówalé. This happens most frequently when the son-in-law is so young that he can still be considered a child. This term can even be used by an elder brother

606 women called "mother," such as the mother's sisters and the father's wives. The law does not seem strictly applicable to these persons, but seems to cover them by extension. On the other hand, there is no comparable law with regard to a woman and her father-in-law.

606 578 A violation of this prohibition results in a great palaver, for it is considered a serious lack of respect. It may produce a serious domestic quarrel. [290] A wife will refuse to perform the conjugal act with her husband because he has looked at his mother-in-law. That is why people help each other by warning each other of the "danger" when their respective mothers-in-law arrive.

Compensation for the offense may be made by the payment of a bodndo of several bakonga to the mother-in-law. As long as the payment has not been made, the wife will not fulfill her conjugal duties. After it has been made, everything goes back in order. If it is proved that the situation came about involuntarily, there is no palaver and no payment is required. Nowadays the best Christians tend to give a bodndo once and for all to definitively settle any palaver that may occur in the future and to avoid the obligation of having to submit to this prohibition, since they are beginning to vaguely perceive its uselessness.

(551) A man is even forbidden to pronounce the name of his mother-in-law in her peesence, even to address or call another person of the same name. In such a situation he must resort to a surname or paraphrase. Usually he addresses her as mbɔ́nolɔ́. An infraction of this rule results in the same punishment as if a man were to look at his mother-in-law.

606 If we ask the Nkundɔ́ to give us the reason for this custom, as it is so strange to our point of view, they reply that they are ashamed or embarrassed to see the women who begot their wives, and that to do so would be a grave offense to her. The custom is a means of expressing the respect a son-in-law owes his mother-in-law, and of avoiding unceremonious behavior or too great a familiarity toward her. That is all the explanation they give. For our philosophical turn of mind, it does not exhaust the subject. We are tempted to look for a connection between the intimate relations of the married couple and

age mates, the friendship pact has no connection with the wives of the men involved. If [335] there is a very firm friendship between them, one may lend his wife to the other in some situation or other, but this is a fairly rare occurrence. The Nkundó say that the boeka relationship is for mutual assistance only.

If a case of adultery occurs, the husband has every right to demand an indemnity, but if the occurrence is not repeated, he never goes to extremes, and, because of the friendship, he may ask as little as 2 or 3 rings. If the occurrences are repeated without reciprocity, however, the husband often makes a great to-do; he demands a large indemnity and breaks the friendship pact.

Instead of demanding an indemnity some men give their friend a gift (mpóli) asking him to stop the illicit relations. Often this action is but a subterfuge to relax the other's vigilance so that, feeling freer, he will be more easily apprehended.

Between persons bearing the same name (ndoí, pl. bandoí). (1)

1. See Chapter I, Part 1, Article III.

there is no free access to wives, nor are persons of opposite sexes ever considered ndoí. Such relations would be considered concubinage or pure and simple adultery.

To summarize, a certain freedom of access to each other's wives exists among age mates, but it is subject to the expressed or tacit consent of the respective husbands. These relations are not considered adulterous. Such freedom does not exist with respect to other categories of persons. But these, nevertheless, had to be mentioned here because the similarity among the kinds of relationship discussed might produce errors in the reader's mind, and because in certain parts of the Congo such persons fall into the same category as Nkundó age mates.

2. Concubinage

Concubinage (called lisámbá among the Bolote, ngóg among the Bombwanja as well as the Ekonda) is a union [336] between

The name bolɛ́mbɛ́ seems to come from the fact that for an instant during the installation ceremony the woman is naked. In fact in certain dialects the word means "nudity."

Nowadays this name is common among Nkundó women (rarely men), but it does not indicate that they are bolɛ́mbɛ́. The name is borne in memory of ancestresses or relatives who had that position and is transmitted in the family like any other name.

All the tribes under discussion here use the same term, bolɛ́mbɛ́. The Bombomba alone say bodíé. (2)

2. Elsewhere, as in the Losanganya region, among the Bosaka, etc., the bolɛ́mbɛ́ is called ekila (interdiction, taboo).

It is clear from everything that has been said that the nkɔ́ndɛ́ and the bolɛ́mbɛ́ have nothing in common with each other. [353] The two institutions are decidedly different. Nowadays they are beginning to be confused with each other, however. For the installation of a bolɛ́mbɛ́ has become extremely rare, and in some regions it has already disappeared. The colonial government has established districts and appointed chiefs in charge of them. Very frequently, they are not those who in the purely indigenous order would have been the most influential men, the masters, those who would have the biggest say in their society, who would be said to have the ikɔ́kɔ, the first place.

As far as I have been able to observe, the other tribes on the equator also have the two types of wives with special positions, who bear names which vary with the dialects.

Do the Ntómbá and the Bolɔ́ngɛ́ between the Boloko and the Congo have only the bolɛ́mbɛ́? That is the conclusion one draws from Engels' study of the Wangata (Revue congolaise, Vol. 2, no. 1, p. 33). If that were so, the frequent contacts with this people may have increased the confusion even more. Natives who are strangers to the Bolɔ́ngɛ́ tribe but who have lived many years among them as catechists, have maintained, however, that

Article V. Name Giving

553 Naming does not occur on any predetermined date. It is not delayed without a special reason. No feast or ceremony accompanies the event. The father simply puts colored powder on the child's forehead as a sign of joy.

It is the father's right to choose a name for his child. Sometimes he asks for the family's opinion. Preferably he gives names of his relatives, deceased or living, or sometimes his own. But it is proper to respect the mother's feelings also. Failure to take them into account could provoke the woman to cause an abortion in order to punish him for being so willful as to neglect her family.

[845] [769] A painful childbirth, like the repeated death of preceding children, is often attributed to the rancor of a dead person who is discontented. In such a situation the Nkundó await the verdict [787] of a dream, or they have recourse to the judgment of a nkanga (doctor-magician) in order to be able to satisfy the irascible dead.

If the situation recurs too often, the calamity is attributed 553 to a rivalry between dead persons who are fighting over which of 551 their respective names should be given to the newborn; the envious loser kills the child. In order to avoid such mean vengeance and make everyone content while satisfying none, the father gives the child a neutral name or a Bɔtswa name, such as Bɔtswá, Sáka, Ɛ́fálína (nameless), Bɔtsilá (lack of success, bad luck), Litúli (dead without known cause), etc. If the child has already received a name, but for one reason or another the inauspicious fury of a ghost is feared, it is always possible to change from that name to another.

Children are usually given the names of relatives of the same sex. Exceptions are sometimes made, however, if one of the sexes is not sufficiently represented among the progeny, in which case the bearer of the name can always change it later, and he almost always does. Nevertheless, there are [500] no specifically male or female names, except for those that consist of the relative form of a verb, such as Ósásuka, "the coquette," Óyémengo, "she who comes with plenty," Ófénji, "she who excels." Finally, certain names are sometimes used for either sex.

The etymology of most names is impossible to trace, and
● 551 they have no meaning. Some are borrowed from the nomenclature of the realms of nature or of things, but no attention is paid to their original meaning, and allusions to it -- sometimes attempted by certain Europeans -- are either not understood or badly received. Other names are dictated by the child's constitution, for example Ókunjolɔ́, "who will be buried even today," or Báwâlɔ́f, "one dies only later." (1) Names sometimes also commemorate a special

1. Both names are intended to prevent allusions to the child's debility and to express the equivalent of the saying: it is but a life of languor.

event, such as a great mourning (Báwá, "they die"; Bálela, "people weep"), a rivalry (Báunela, "they fight for," meaning that two men are rivals for the possession of the mother of the child to whom the name is given). Finally, some names carry the meaning of a saying, such as Báwake, "all men must die," etc.

In closing let us repeat that persons who bear the same
[512] name are often bound by a special friendship, give each other presents, and help each other. However, such a relationship does not entitle persons of different sexes to have intimate relations with each other, and if they do so such relations are treated as concubinage or simply adultery.

Article VI. Twins

845 Although for the Nkundó the birth of twins (baása, sing. ása), does not have the importance that other peoples attach to it [501], it does have some special features, the chief of which is the absence of the prohibitions and regulations that go with ordinary births. Twins are free from all common prohibitions; they are fulíngɛ́. (1) Let is examine the details.

1. This is true even with respect to abstentions during mourning.

945 The event is announced by the usual signal, but the signal
[202] is doubled or, if the children are of different sexes, the signal for each sex is given once. It is followed by the dance beat: two
[535] or three long and two short.

The next day the father's relatives go outside the village,
945 preferably to a crossroads. On each side they plant a stalk of
778 lokɔ́kɔ́lɔ́kɔ́. All around the stalk they spread a little heap of small branches and various leaves called jɔ́kɔ́. It is a sign and a place of benediction and good fortune. Each passer-by stops, picks two leaves, places one on each pile, spits on it, and says swá.(2) Then

2. Onomatopoeia for "spit."

they clap hands and twice sing out, yelí yeye. Such behavior brings the benediction of the twins upon a person's journey, his undertakings, his marriage. The umbilical cord as well as the placenta and membrane are buried under the heap.

945 Every morning the mother and father draw two stripes with
362 kaolin on the middle of their foreheads and on their arms, above
[886] and below the elbow. They do the same to the twins. (3) They

3. Sometimes a double stripe is added at the temples The kaolin may be used pure or mixed with the red paint called ngɔ́la.

continue doing so until the child is weaned. If after that time one of the children falls ill, they begin again treating him in this manner until he is cured, taking care not to omit his brother, lest he too fall ill. For while these designs are signs of joy, they are
[751] above all a prophylactic measure against children's fever (ikɔ́tswáki),
[502] called wísanyi when it occurs in twins or in a child following them, and manifests itself chiefly by tumors of the head and face.

945 Twins are invariably called Mbóyɔ́ and Bokɔ́tu, names
● 551 given to the first born and the second respectively, whatever their sex. The Bombwanja (like the Ekonda) use the names Mbɔ́ɔ́ and Mpia, respectively. The mother takes the name of Ámbá.

845 However, these names are not used exclusively by such persons;
851 they may be given to others as well. The father, on the other hand, does not receive a new name; but he bears the title Is'ɛ́y'ɛ́lɛ́, which literally means "father of two." (1) Twins are also said to

1. Among the Ekonda he is called Buka.

be Ǎmbámba (pl. Byǎmbámba) from the verb -ámba, "to accept, to receive," because they are permitted to accept and to take everything, since none of the usual prohibitions apply to them.

The mother of twins is not required to go into seclusion
845 (nyang'ɛ́y'aáaa ɛ́ɛ́ɛ́te waɛ́kelé). The shed belonging to the head
393 of the clan, that is, the one in whose home important animals (leopards, etc.) are dismembered, is set up for her. (2) The shed

2. Therefore, at the bonenga place or the place of dismembering important animals (nyama yǎ bikɔ́ɔ́o, literally "superb animals").

is closed by means of palms. Neither the parents, nor the helper, nor the persons who enter this place are required to observe continence or the other prohibitions involved in elɛ́lɛ́.

All the members of the kin group come to greet the twins
845 and give each one a present (hens, knives, arrows, food), which is received by the father or the mother. Whenever anything is given to one of the twins, even if it is the smallest object, the same must be given to the other; otherwise the latter would die. If the mother takes one in her arms, the other one must also be picked up, either by her or by the father. If she strikes one, she must also strike his brother. This [503] duality therefore applies to everything, and with even greater reason to nursing.

If a twin child cries or is ill, the parents must sing and
[534] dance to the accompaniment of a lokolé and a ngɔ́mo drum, a ceremony called -bɔ́ŋga baáaa. If someone invites a twin or his

600 the same rights as the other children of the polygynist.

595 The polygynist always sought to increase the number of his
556 wives, for his prestige rose and his fortune increased in that manner.
593 If anyone in civilized lands seeks to enlarge his fortune, this is done, people say, in order to insure the future of his children. The native thinks little about that; his primary idea is to enjoy himself and to surpass others in prestige and esteem. As far as the future of his children is concerned, there are polygynists who possess twenty or thirty wives or even more, and sometimes they have only one or two children. Also it is little in keeping with their notions to care for the future; he who is still alive tomorrow must take care of tomorrow then, so they reason. On the contrary, instead of caring
595 for his children, the polygynist often took great trouble to obtain a
593 wife for his son. The son, however, was not yet the owner of his
584 wife; it was, so to speak, only a loan. Not until after the death of
606 his father did he become owner. In some districts, when the father had obtained a wife for his son, he first kept this wife for some time for himself. Only after a few months did he give her to his son. In
595 other districts, when the wife was pregnant by the son, he was obliged
593 to send her for a few days to his father. He was not allowed to bear
606 the honor of fatherhood alone; his father must share that with him.
742 The father reserved for himself the honor of naming all of the chil-
551 dren of his children. In some areas of the Congo, morals were so
835 low and common that the father even kept his own daughters in his harem. This did not occur in Equatorial Africa, but there was a custom that was not much better. The magician was sometimes
583 consulted about the bride price which the father tried to get for his
711 daughter, or the brother for his sister.

The magician then gave them the advice that they themselves should first have relations with their own daughter or sister. This custom existed almost everywhere in Equatorial Africa.

583 [838] Bride Price. In general, the daughter was given in marriage upon payment of a bride price. The father had little choice of the future husband of his daughter. The one who guaranteed the most goods in payment was certain to get her. Since, in most cases, the little daughter had not yet arrived at the years of maturity, there was naturally no question of her consent. The bride price was not paid all at once, but gradually during the years while the daughter grew up. Since the daughter was given without her consent

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

inches long and two inches in width, numbering up to seven are brought and attached to the back of her *lombo* by folding them over it.[1]

The first male child which was born to the *nkumu* before he acceded to the office is known as *Iyomi Nkui*. If he has none, then the right to this name passes to the first male child to be born to his younger brothers. Any child born on the day that the *nkumu* is given his *wontolo* is also called *Iyomi*; if a male he will be *Mola Iyomi*, if a female, *Mpombo Iyomi*.[2] These children must not see the *nkumu* until they are old enough to know his name and greet him properly, and so they are taken to some village other than the one in which he has his residence. When such children are considered old enough to take up residence in the village of the *nkumu* it is an occasion for revelry, a big dance, *nteko*, is held, and there is a feast. The child, *Iyomi*, is brought to the village of the *nkumu* with rejoicing, and this is a signal for everybody desiring to do so to help himself to anything belonging to the *nkumu*. Goats and fowls may be killed and eaten, sugar-cane rooted up, bananas, plantains, and other crops growing near by seized for food. Because of this custom the *nkumu* will take precautions and send his livestock, at least, off to some other village in order not to lose more than he can help.[3]

The *ayumbu*, the singer or singers, and the *atetii*, the praisers already mentioned, remain with the *nkumu* during his period of seclusion. Added to these is *otombo lokombi*, the bearer of the *lokombi*, a stringed instrument played with the fingers, similar to a bass viol in its general appearance.

Inside the *ipumu* during the seclusion of the *nkumu*, few people have the right of entrance, but as one enters the *shanga* where the daylight hours are spent, one finds the couch of the *nkumu* on the left and towards the rear. On the same side and towards the front are seated the *otombo lokombi* and the *ayumbu*. *Nsumu*'s couch is to the right of, and parallel to, that of the *nkumu*, but still to the left of the centre posts. To the right of her couch is the fire in the centre, and beyond the fire on the right side is a couch for the *mumi*, likewise somewhat to the rear, with a space in front for the *anetii*.

The month's seclusion being completed, the *nkumu* prepares to buy the homage of the village. *Nsumu* gets rid of her decorative colours, and assumes ordinary attire, becoming like any other of the wives, and is ready to take up all the usual duties of a wife, whether in the garden or at the house. The people are called to come and render to the *nkumu* their homage and praise. The men come to the *ipumu*, are admitted to the presence of their *nkumu* and seat themselves on the bare earth with their legs wide apart and facing him. They then, without uttering a word, greet him in the

[1] The *lombo* is a belt which used to be worn by Tumba women encircling the buttocks, and this was used to attach their only garment, the *ekwa* among the Bongando, this being a short loin cloth, or an *ejenge* among other groups, this being a woven cloth only worn between the legs.

[2] When a new *nkumu* assumes office, one already in office will take this opportunity of getting more of his own named *Iyomi*. He takes them to the *molende* of the new *nkumu*, and having placed a bracelet of cowrie shells on the right wrist, and sometimes one on the right ankle, asks the member of the *molende* whose right it is to give away the *wontolo* to name these sons *Mumi* (pl. of '*Iyomi*'). This man will then take such a son, and presenting him to the people introduces him by giving him a name, and following with praise as, '*Our Iyomi Lomee, hein!*' and the crowd replies with the customary '*Boon!*'

[3] It is well to remember that not every individual bearing names associated with the institution of the *nkumu* is directly concerned with it. With the practice of resurrecting 'dead relatives by naming new-born children after them, such names as these become widespread.